

Message Text

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46-40

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-02 EB-03 COME-00 TRSE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 NSC-07 NSCE-00

AGR-03 H-01 SCI-03 NASA-01 PRS-01 /052 W

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P 201330Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6095

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0366

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MA

SUBJ: MALAGASY GOVERNMENT (GOMR) PURCHASE OF AGM ABATTOIR

REF: TANANARIVE 0358

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOMR REBUFF OF LEASING POSSIBILITIES FOR ABATTOIR AS ALTERNATIVE TO GOVT ACQUISITION AT MINIMUM AUCTION PRICE IT HAD SET SEEMS LIKELY LEAD TO PROTESTS BY AMERICAN INVESTORS/CREDITORS. SERIES OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS ON U.S. SIDE AND COUNTERACTIONS ON MALAGASY SIDE COULD JEOPARDIZE IMPORTANT U.S. INTERESTS IN MADAGASCAR. ACTION RECOMMENDED: DEPT CONSIDER WHAT MIGHT BE DONE TO FORESTALL SUCH CONSEQUENCES. END SUMMARY.

1. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 19MAR AUCTION IN WHICH GOMR PURCHASED AGM ABATTOIR (REFTEL), TRUSTEE RAMAHOLIMIHASO INFORMED EMBOFF THAT SHE DID NOT HAVE TIME TO COMPLETE STUDY OF PROPOSAL FOR LEASING OF ABATTOIR GIVEN TO HER ON 07MAR74. FOR ONE THING, SHE SAID, IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN CONFIRMATION THAT EACH OF AGM CREDITORS MENTIONED IN PROPOSAL WAS IN FACT PREPARED TO HELP FINANCE \$7.9 MILLION 10-YEAR LEASE ARRANGEMENT. SHE ALSO ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT HER ATTEMPTS TO DISCUSS THIS LEASE PLAN WITHIN GOVT WERE REBUFFED.

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2. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION, REPPAS' LAWYER LEBEL TOLD EMBOFF THAT

RAMAHOLIMIHASO HAD CONSIDERED POSSIBILITY OF GETTING TOGETHER GROUP OF MALAGASY BUSINESSMEN TO LEASE ABATTOIR. ACCORDING TO LEBEL, SHE WAS TOLD TO STICK TO HER "ACCOUNTING BUSINESS" BY GOMR. HE ADDED SHE DROPPED PLAN BECAUSE HER "RICH" FAMILY HAS TOO MUCH TO LOSE IN ATTEMPTING TO BUCK GOMR.

3. LATER SAME DAY DURING REGULAR WEEKLY CONSOFF VISIT TO REPPAS AT PRISON, LATTER CLAIMED LEBEL HAD TOLD HIM THAT PROMPT (FRENCH LAWYER EMPLOYED BY GOMR IN CASE AGAINST REPPAS) HAD WARNED LEBEL LAST WEEK THAT, IF REPPAS AND BACOPOULOS MADE ANY ATTEMPT TO BLOCK GOMR PURCHASE OF ABATTOIR, IT WOULD RESULT IN THEIR RECEIVING STIFFER SENTENCES AS OUTCOME OF APPEAL PROCEEDINGS.

4. COMMENTS:

A) PROTEST OF GOMR ACQUISITION OF ABATTOIR BY CERTAIN AMERICAN INVESTORS AND/OR CREDITORS SEEMS LIKELY. WILL PRESUMABLY BE DELAYED HOWEVER UNTIL DECISION ON REPPAS APPEAL ANNOUNCED 22MAR.

B) WE SUSPECT THEY MAY ATTEMPT (1) INFLUENCE CONGRESS ON MALAGASY QUOTA IN NEW SUGAR LEGISLATION NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION AND/OR (2) PRESS FOR INVOCATION OF HICKENLOOPER AMENDEMENT TO CUT OFF AID TO MADAGASCAR.

C) EITHER COULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON GOMR DECISION ON PROPOSED AGREEMENT FOR EXTENSION NASA STATION AND/OR ON U.S. ACCESS TO MALAGASY GRAPHITE.

D) DEPT MAY WISH CONSIDER WHETHER THERE IS ANY ACTION IT COULD TAKE TO FORESTALL POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES RAISED IN PRECEDING SUB-PARAGRAPH.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TANANA00366
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740059-0028
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740328/aaaaazyk.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: TANANARIVE 0358
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <03 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALAGASY GOVERNMENT (GOMR) PURCHASE OF AGM ABATTOIR
TAGS: CASC, BDIS, MA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005